You can make your own custom-designed perfin album pages on your computer

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If you own a computer, you can easily design attractive pages for your perfins using any of the better word processing programs. The three pages shown here were designed on Microsoft Word and were printed out on white index stock on a laser printer.

All that is required is a little imagination and, in some cases, a little patience when things don't quite go right.

My perfins specialty is "words on perfins," that is, perfin patterns that spell English words. You can blame my English teacher background!

The first two pages shown here were really easy to design because I use acetate mounts for the stamps and covers and that relieved me of the need to draw individual boxes for stamps and covers. However, Microsoft Word has an "AutoShapes" feature that makes it pretty easy to draw and size boxes and even easier to copy them so you can set up a whole page of boxes of the same size if you want. This a particularly nice feature for type and issue collectors who need multiple spaces on one page. You can also draw different size boxes on the same page so you can mount your regular and commemorative issues together. If you choose, you can use the fill-color feature of Microsoft Word to print a black background in each of the spaces.

I chose to solve the problem of perfins on commercial covers by using "landscape" pages, or pages that are set up with the top on the 11-inch side. I realize that they might not be appropriate for an exhibit, but that isn't my first priority in setting up my personal albums.

The great advantage of designing your own album pages this way is that you can include anything you want: room for the stamps and covers, information about the user, even additional artwork if you want it.

The third illustrated page is from my collection of perfins of the world. I don't try to collect every perfin from every country, just one or two patterns from every country that has ever used perfins. I figure that will keep me busy for a few years.

I got a little fancier in designing these pages. The circular logo at the top of the page was designed with the "word art" feature of Microsoft Word. I also copied and clipped a line-art map showing where Angola is located and added it to the page. The stamps themselves are placed in black-backed acetate mounts to make the perfin pattern stand out better.

I print my pages on a laser printer on white "index" paper, a lightweight card stock. I then insert the pages into plastic page protectors for additional protection and ease of handling. An ink-jet printer works just as well, but it is sometimes more difficult to get solid black backgrounds to print attractively.

If you have a computer and are interested in making your own album pages, allow me to recommend a good book. *Linn's Guide to Stamp Collecting Software and Collecting on the Internet*, by William F. Sharpe, is a super collection of information on the subject. Sharpe discusses computer programs for organizing collections and making album pages, and reviews a number of Internet sites. Check any recent issue of *Linn's* for more information about the book. Sharpe is a regular contributor to *Linn's*.

Watch the *Bulletin* for more articles about computers and perfins.